



# N O R F O L K

## **Design Guidelines For The Downtown Historic Overlay District**

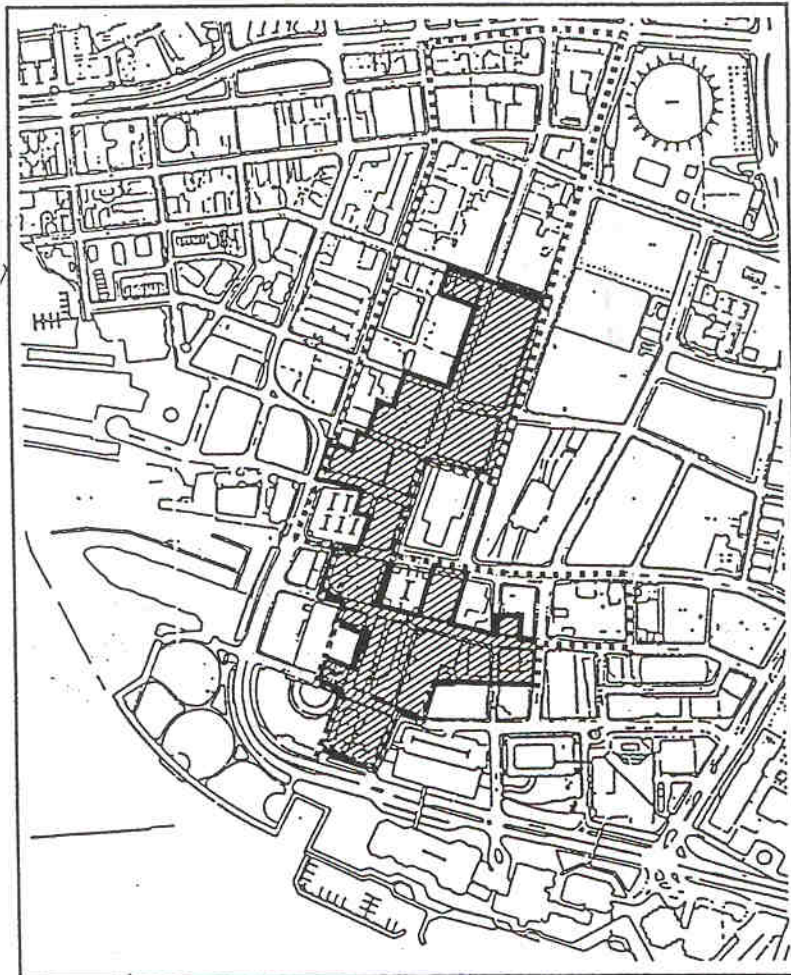
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## DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR THE DOWNTOWN NORFOLK HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

Norfolk's downtown is a part of the city unique for its density, for the quality of its buildings, and for its urban scale. These attributes are recognized statewide and nationally by the inclusion of the Downtown Norfolk Historic District in the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The Local Historic Overlay District approved by the Norfolk Design Review Committee, the Norfolk City Planning Commission, and City Council in March, 1992, includes an area larger than that designated by the state and national districts. The zoning regulations pertaining to the Historic Overlay District can be found in Chapter 11 of the Zoning Ordinance. The boundaries of the local historic overlay district reflect the special character of the commercial development history of Downtown Norfolk. The boundaries of the National Register and Virginia Landmarks Register district and the larger Historic Overlay District are depicted on Map 1.



Map 1: Local and National Register District Boundaries.



These historic buildings are important assets for downtown Norfolk that add to its visual variety and vitality. Granby Street, at the center of the Historic District, was once the region's leading retail street. More recently downtown Norfolk - like many other downtowns - has lost traditional center-city activities to suburban competition. Norfolk has worked for many years to preserve its downtown as a regional center. The revival of the Freemason residential district, the development of tourist-related activities along the waterfront, improvement of the highway access, and the construction of numerous major office buildings have already been reflected in the rehabilitation and reuse of a significant number of buildings within the Historic District. The construction of the MacArthur Center with 1.2 million square feet of retail space immediately adjacent to the Historic District, plus the introduction of city offices and the Tidewater Community College onto Granby Street itself should all have a strong positive effect on the economic vitality of the Historic District. The challenge will be to achieve the economic resurgence of the whole district while preserving its historic character.

Within the Downtown Historic Overlay District the Design Review Committee and City Planning Commission will be reviewing three different kinds of construction activity that need Certificates of Appropriateness and each form of activity will require a slightly different application of the guidelines. The Certificate of Appropriateness will be granted after approval is given by the Design Review Committee and City Planning Commission.

- a) For renovation, remodeling, and repair of existing structures, the guidelines seek to guide and encourage restoration in line with the original character of the structure.
- b) For new construction the focus of the guidelines is on the compatibility of new construction with the existing character of the Downtown Historic Overlay District without dictating style or taste.
- c) For the placement and size of signs and awnings, the guidelines will encourage location, size, and design that is compatible with the building and adjoining structures.

The guidelines that follow are written with regard to both the National Register Historic District and the area immediately surrounding it. The varied architectural styles and levels of urban density and scale that are represented in the downtown area are all addressed in the guidelines.

The City of Norfolk is committed to continuing downtown's transformation and revitalization. Through the combined efforts of the public and private sector, downtown will continue to be an ever more dynamic, unique, and diverse urban place.

# **OVERALL POLICIES FOR THE DOWNTOWN NORFOLK HISTORIC DISTRICT**

## **POLICY 1: Preserve the identity and image of downtown Norfolk.**

Downtown Norfolk should be unique; it should have its own strong character and ambience and elements of the old should be combined with the new in a manner that is complementary and pleasing. For this reason, old buildings should be preserved and reused whenever possible.

Historic preservation is important to a community's sense of place, livability, tourism, and property values. The preservation of historic structures works towards defining community character and can become an important element in broad economic development and housing programs.

## **POLICY 2: Maintain a mix of uses and encourage street level vitality.**

It is the diversity of uses and experiences that add to the vitality of a center city. Downtown Norfolk should seek to strengthen the mix of uses and should assure that the street frontage and the streetscape encourage pedestrian movement in downtown and enhance a focus on active uses.

## **POLICY 3: Maintain the architectural character, distinctive nature, and density of Downtown Norfolk's buildings.**

Renovations to existing buildings should preserve the integrity of the historic architectural features of the building. New development should respect and enhance the visual character of the area at large. The City's policy, while encouraging downtown development and rehabilitation, should be sensitive to the aesthetic value of our built environment.

## **POLICY 4: Downtown should continue to provide a resource for education and recreation.**

Downtown contains the City's greatest concentration of historic commercial and residential properties. Certain buildings are connected with notable people and events. Others help to establish a street scene that conveys a sense of place and time. Downtown's heritage is also represented in its proximity to the water, and the City has been active in preserving the waterfront as a place for human enjoyment. The City should continue to view downtown as a place for people to enjoy and a place from which people can learn.

# **GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION**

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The following guidelines for rehabilitation and renovation of existing buildings in the Downtown



Historic Overlay District are based upon the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

Taxpayers that are interested in restoring old and historic buildings can take advantage of tax credits. Properties must be income-producing to qualify for Federal tax credits. For the 20% credit a property must be a "certified historic structure" which is listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places; or located within a "registered historic district" and certified by the Secretary of the Interior as contributing to the historic character of that district. The 10% tax credit is available for rehabilitations of non-historic buildings over 50 years in age. A rehabilitation must be "substantial" to qualify the investor for any tax credits. The Internal Revenue Service defines "substantial" as exceeding the owner's adjusted basis in the building, or \$5000, whichever is greater.

In January of 1997 the State of Virginia implemented a tax credit program. For this program the properties do not need to be income producing. This program is being phased in according to the following schedule:

1997	10%
1998	15%
1999	20%
2000 and thereafter	25%

For detailed information on both the Federal and State Tax Credit Programs please contact the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Portsmouth Regional Office at 757-396-6707.

The following guidelines for rehabilitation and renovation are designed to help building owners meet the guidelines for tax credits and to ensure the preservation of the unique architectural quality of the Downtown Historic Overlay District area even when tax credits are not to be used.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PRIMARY FACADES AND STOREFRONTS**

A building's primary facade is the portion of the building fronting on the street; corner buildings usually have two primary facades. The primary facades are the most architecturally distinguished as it is there that the building puts its best face forward to vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

The primary facades of Norfolk's commercial building were originally composed of street level storefronts, usually capped by a small cornice, and upper levels of evenly spaced windows. There are sometimes decorative spandrels between windows, or columns, or pilasters, decorative brick, and stone, or terra cotta around the windows. The turn-of-the-century buildings originally had heavily decorative cornices.

The buildings' storefronts have at least one principal entryway, and most have large expanses of glass for merchandise display. In buildings that have retained their original storefronts, there are

usually panels beneath the display windows, and occasionally, transoms above. The doorways are often recessed.

**GUIDELINE: Remove veneers which cover original facades, wherever possible.**

Many of the buildings in the area have been renovated over the years to give them a more "modern" appearance, covering up their original facades. It is the intent of these guidelines to encourage removal of the added facades to reveal the original facade whenever feasible.

Removal of the newer facade materials must be done carefully so as not to damage the underlying building materials.

False canopy roofs over storefronts that have been added to buildings should be removed.

**GUIDELINE: Repair or replace cornices and facade ornamentation.**

The rich ornamentation of Downtown Norfolk's buildings should be maintained wherever possible.

Repair of historic features and/or materials should be attempted before replacing them. If replacement is necessary, the replacement should match the color, texture, and/or pattern or the original feature.

Where original elements are missing, there are often clues to their shape and size in shadow lines on the building itself, and in old photographs. Missing pieces of ornament may even be stored inside the building. Such clues should be used in reconstructing the missing element, or in designing its replacement.

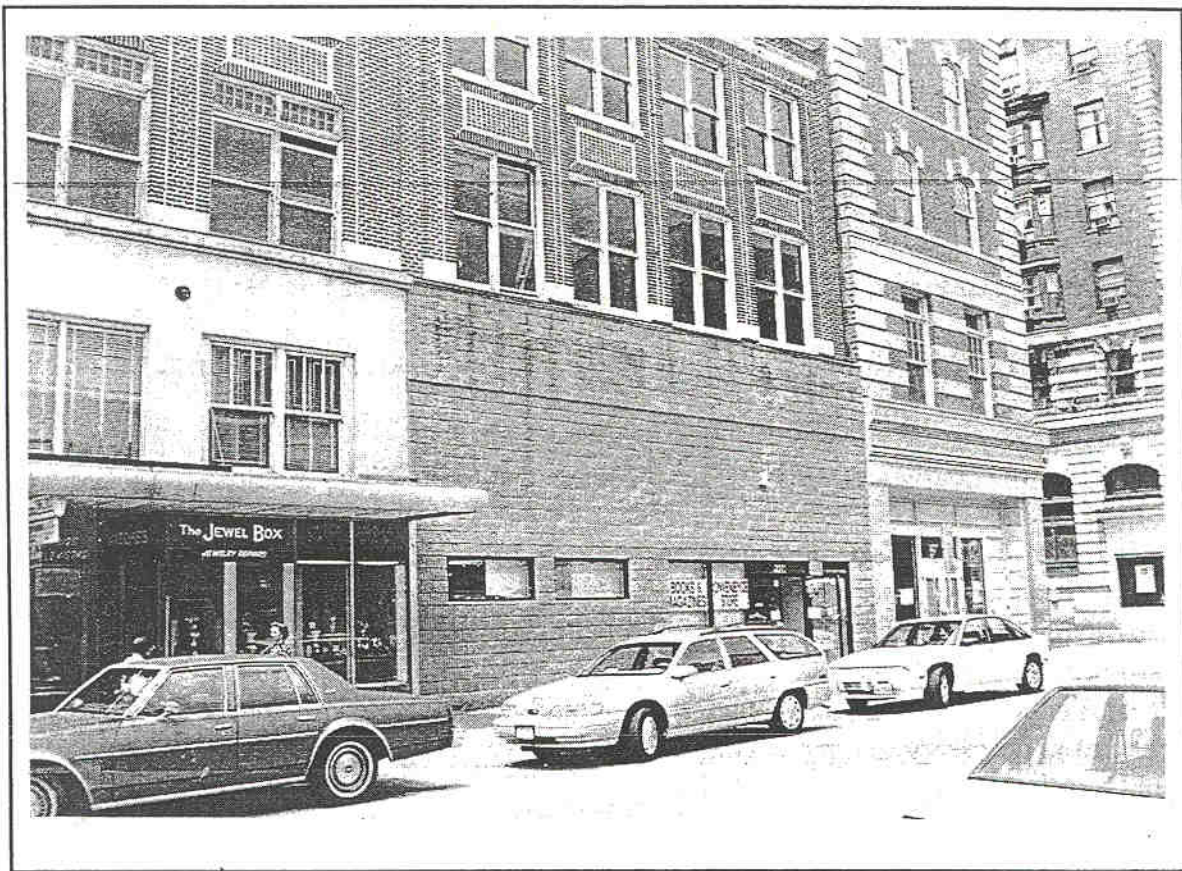
Any new element should be sympathetic to the building and responsive to the District's architectural context.

**GUIDELINE: Renovation should respect the original building's design, its architectural features, proportions, and context.**

Each building is a product of its own time. It is a mistake to create a false historic appearance by adding features that pre-date or post-date the building's construction. For example, small, multi-pane windows are most often associated with the Colonial style, as are coach lanterns and shutters, and are probably not appropriate for downtown commercial buildings dating from the early years of the 20th century.

Any renovation should respect the building's original proportions. Changing the proportions of a door or window will affect the overall scale of the building and should be avoided.





**Figure 1** - Renovation that failed to replace ornamentation and failed to respect original features, proportion, and context.

**GUIDELINE:**      **Maintain the original location of primary entrances wherever possible.**

Many of downtown Norfolk's buildings feature recessed entrances. Preservation of this very characteristic design feature is encouraged (it would be required for a renovation to be eligible for federal tax credits for Certified Historic Rehabilitations.)

Rehabilitation should maintain the scale of the original door opening. A door made primarily of glass is preferred.

The size and symmetry of buildings should be considered if the original storefront entrance is to be relocated.

**GUIDELINE:**      **A storefront should be designed to respect the building and the prevailing character of the district.**

If a storefront has been altered previously and is to be renovated, the renovation should respect the

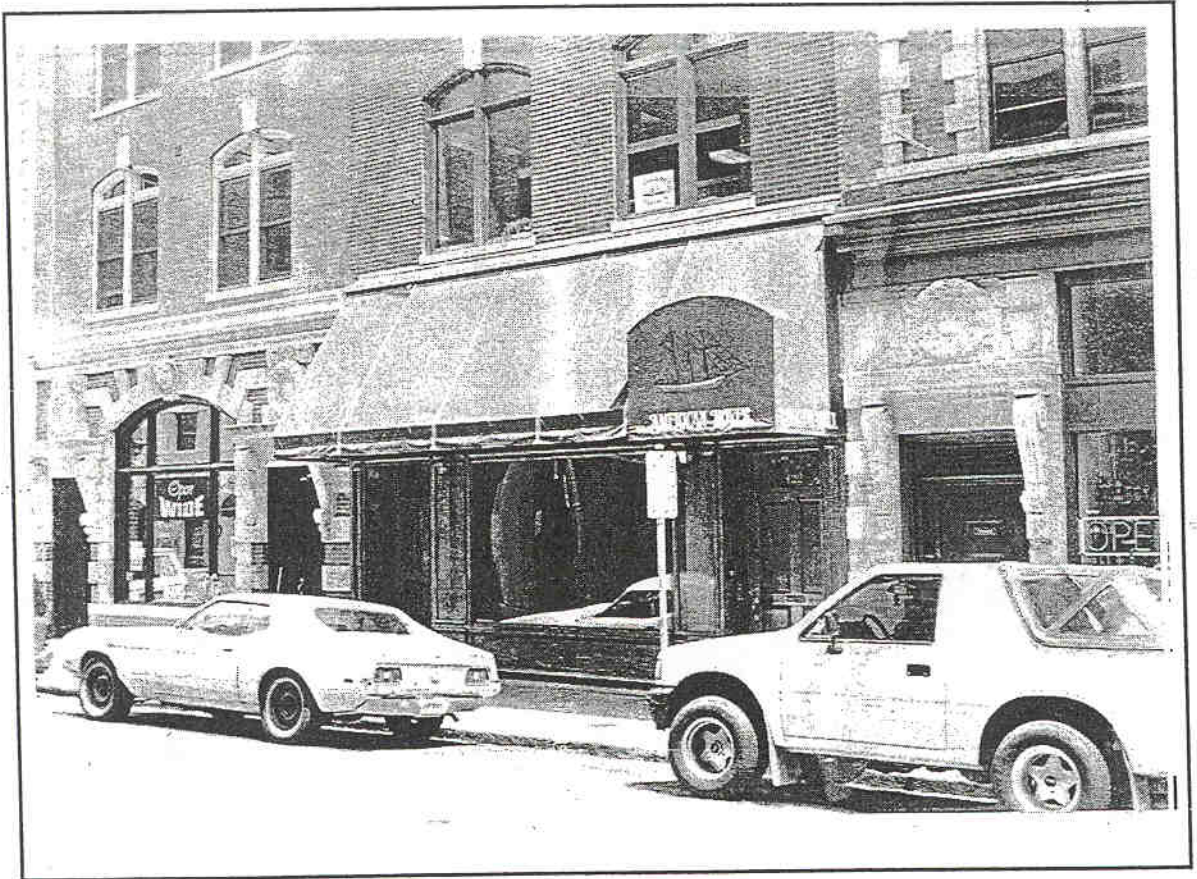


original character of the building, including the window pattern of the upper stories, the proportions of the building as a whole, and adjacent storefronts.

The new (remodeled) storefront should contribute to the visual continuity of the streetscape.

The new storefront should maintain the building line of the original storefront at the sidewalk.

The storefront should be predominantly of glass.



**Figure 2** - New storefront designed to respect the building and the prevailing character of the district.

**GUIDELINE:** Signs and awnings that obscure a building's architectural features should be relocated.

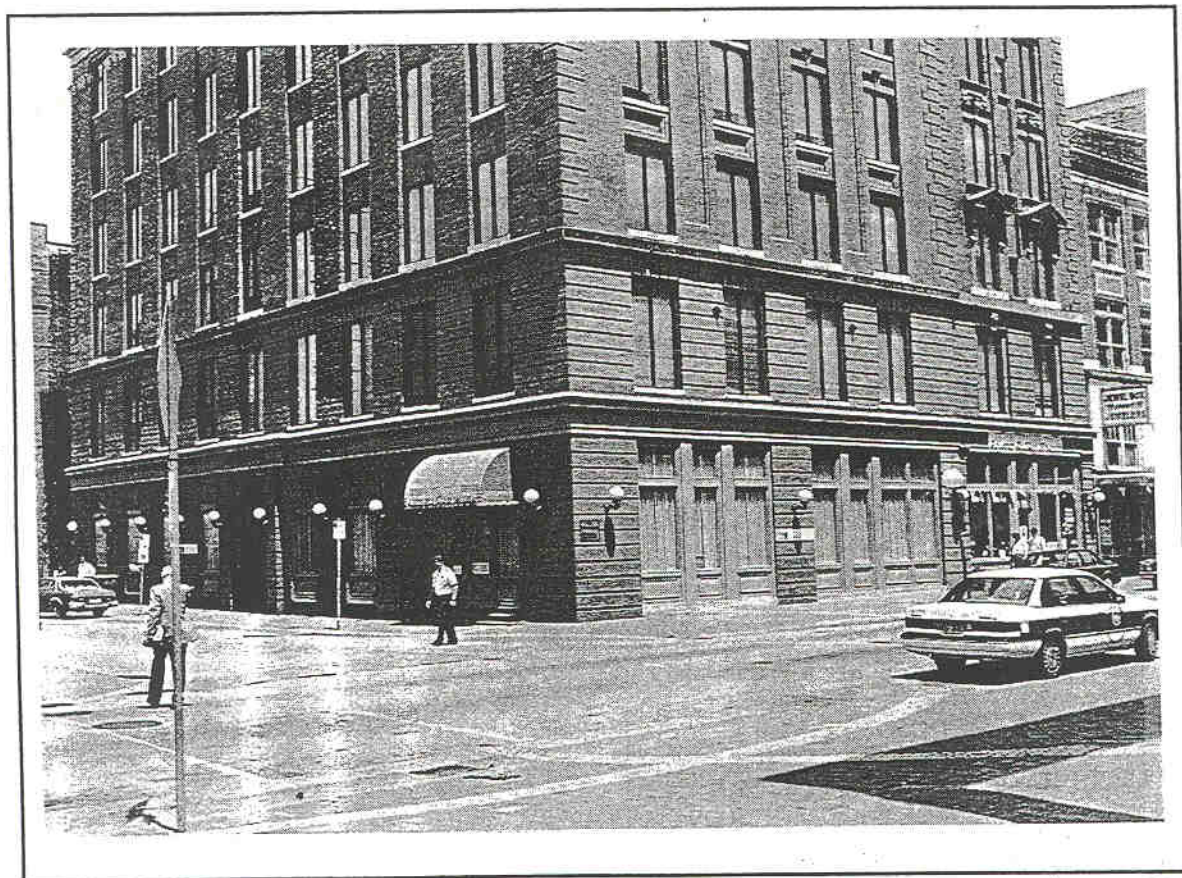
See Section on "Signs and Awnings", for specific guidance of placing new signs and awnings on buildings.



**GUIDELINE:      Preserve the original pattern of window openings.**

The original size of the window openings should be maintained. Original window openings that have been blocked shut should be re-opened. If in the renovation it is not possible to return an operable window to the opening, windows which have similar characteristics should be installed.

If the interior renovation requires that original ceiling heights be lowered, the lowered ceiling should not visibly cut across windows on the facade. Instead, there should be a recessed soffit between the windows and the new ceiling.



**Figure 3 - Renovation preserved original pattern of window openings.**

**GUIDELINE:      Repair original windows and window trim rather than replacing them.**

Repair should match existing details, sizes, and configurations of existing windows.

Where windows or window openings have been painted over, the paint should be removed.

**GUIDELINE:** Windows should be located in original openings.

New windows should not be added to principal facades, and old windows should not be filled in.

**GUIDELINE:** When window replacement is necessary, the new window should match the original window as closely as possible.

The pattern of window panes should be the same or similar.

The profiles of the mullions and muntins should approximate those of the original window.

Snap-in muntins should not be used.

The replacement window's size should fit the old window opening. Older windows should not be replaced with smaller ones with the remaining space filled in.

Clear glass, rather than tinted or reflective, is strongly recommended.

**GUIDELINE:** For energy efficiency, use exterior or interior storm sash to maintain the character of the original appearance.

Exterior storm windows should not damage or obscure decorative window trim. The glass in storm windows should be clear, not tinted.

## **GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING MATERIALS**

The most common building materials used in the downtown area are masonry, wood, and architectural metals. Wood and architectural metals are used in storefronts and for decorative elements with masonry as the primary building material.

**GUIDELINE:** The building's original materials should be preserved and repaired whenever possible.

If the materials are too damaged or deteriorated to be repaired, they should be replaced with like materials.

**GUIDELINE:** When it is necessary to use new materials, they should be similar in color and texture to those found in the district.

Appropriate materials include: brick and stone masonry, terra cotta, stucco, tile, wood, and architectural metals, such as copper, bronze and lead.



**GUIDELINE:**        **Maintain as many of the original masonry details as possible since these elements define the overall character of the building.**

Masonry elements should be repaired rather than replaced if possible.

New brick and mortar colors and textures should match existing finishes.

Masonry should be cleaned only when necessary to halt deterioration or to remove heavy soiling. Abrasive-cleaning methods, or sandblasting, should not be used.

If masonry is unpainted and in good condition, it is best that it remain unpainted.

When masonry requires waterproofing it is recommended that a clear sealer be used.

**GUIDELINE:**        **The following building materials are thought to be inappropriate to the district:**

Imitation wood siding (aluminum or vinyl); Rustic materials such as wood shakes or shingles; Corrugated metal; Corrugated fiberglass; Metal sheets; Imitation stone; EIFS (Exterior Insulation Finishing System, commonly known as synthetic stucco)

**GUIDELINE:**        **Maintain wood and metal surfaces.**

Wood and metal surfaces should be kept primed and coated to prevent deterioration.

**GUIDELINE:**        **The selection and use of colors should be coordinated and compatible with materials on the existing building, and adjoining buildings particularly in areas where consistent families of color predominate.**

Paint colors for window and door trim, and the colors of materials should be selected with attention to compatibility with existing buildings in the Historic District.

## **GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Where new buildings are built adjacent to or between existing buildings, the design of the new building should respond to the character of existing buildings and provide a transition between the old and the new. Examples of techniques that can achieve this objective include matching cornice lines, using similar materials in the new building to those found in older buildings immediately adjacent, and relating building proportions.



Infill construction, in which new buildings are built between two existing buildings, should relate to and respect the continuity and character of existing block frontages that are such a strong determinant of the character of the area. Efforts should be made to maintain the quality of the street wall in the district by building new structures up to the building line established by existing construction. Set-backs and front yards at street level are not desirable.

When taller buildings are added to the district, new construction should respect and complement the distinctive character of the continuous blocks of buildings in the district. For example, the base of a new, tall building can be designed to hold the street wall and relate in scale and materials to its immediate surroundings, while the tower portion of the building can be set back from surrounding streets and contained within the matrix established by new and old buildings at street level.

New buildings can contribute to the distinctive character of the Downtown Historic Overlay District area if siting, visual continuity, and a focus on the street level environment are addressed.

## **BUILDING FOOTPRINT GUIDELINES**

**GUIDELINE:**            **A new building should be built to the front property line to retain a consistent street frontage.**

Avoid constructing a new building which has a front setback that varies significantly from the existing character along the street or downtown in general.

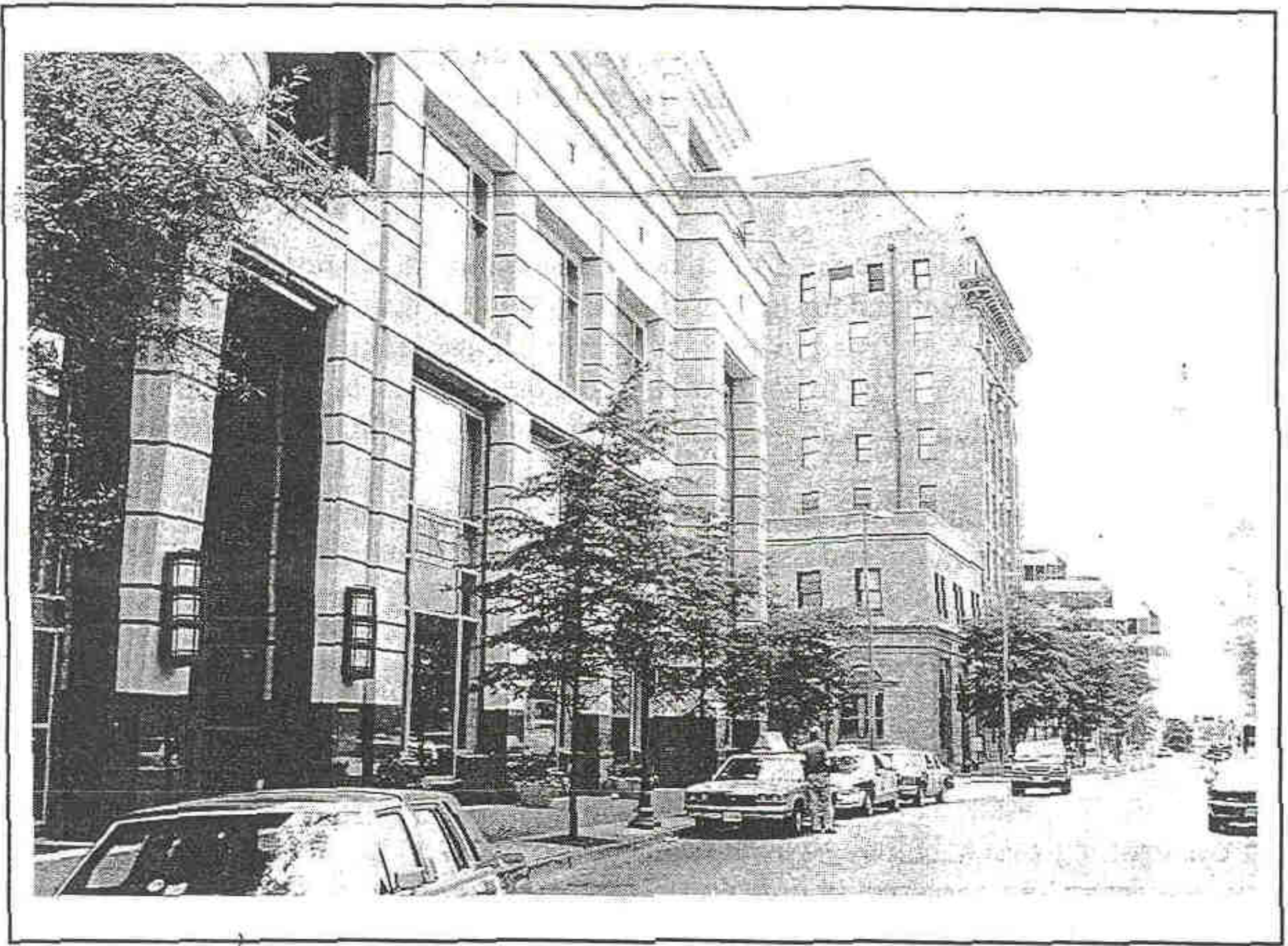
**GUIDELINE:**            **A new building constructed between two existing structures (infill) should fully occupy the width of the space.**

Avoid constructing a building with sideyards. The existing buildings in Downtown fully occupy the width of their lots.

**GUIDELINE:**            **The base of a new building should become an extension of a continuous block front and provide continuity at the street level.**

Continuity can be achieved by matching floor-to-floor heights and relating to existing horizontal design elements, such as moldings and cornices.





**Figure 4 -** New building in foreground respects the continuous street line established by the older building beyond.

## **BUILDING HEIGHT GUIDELINES**

**GUIDELINE:** A new building should be constructed to a height compatible with adjacent buildings.

A significant portion of any new building should be constructed at average height of existing buildings along that block face as seen from the street. The bulk of a building that is significantly larger than the prevailing scale of buildings in the district should be minimized through articulation of the mass with setbacks or changes of plane, so that the larger building is seen as contained within a matrix created by the historic buildings, or occurs at a corner where it is appropriate to the scale of the open space at an intersection.

A new building that is significantly smaller than the prevailing scale of the district can also present difficulties in maintaining architectural continuity between new and old structures. A one story building would only be appropriate on block frontages where that is the predominant building height.



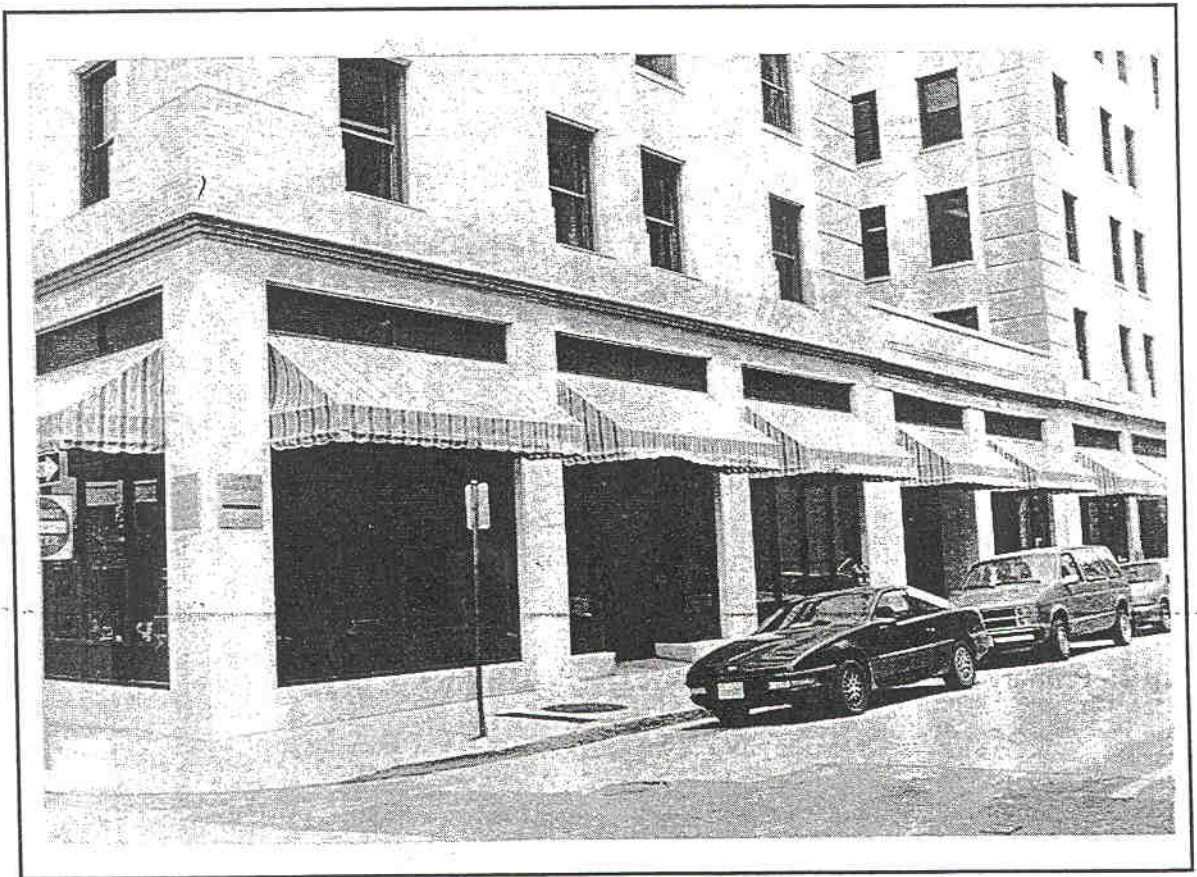
## STREET FRONTAGE GUIDELINES

**GUIDELINE:** The street level of a new building should address the pedestrian by emphasizing storefronts, entrances, and windows along the street.

The street level of a new building should be the primary orientation and access for pedestrians and provide continuity of visual interest. At least fifty percent of the street level facade of a new building should be glazed areas (i.e., doors and windows).

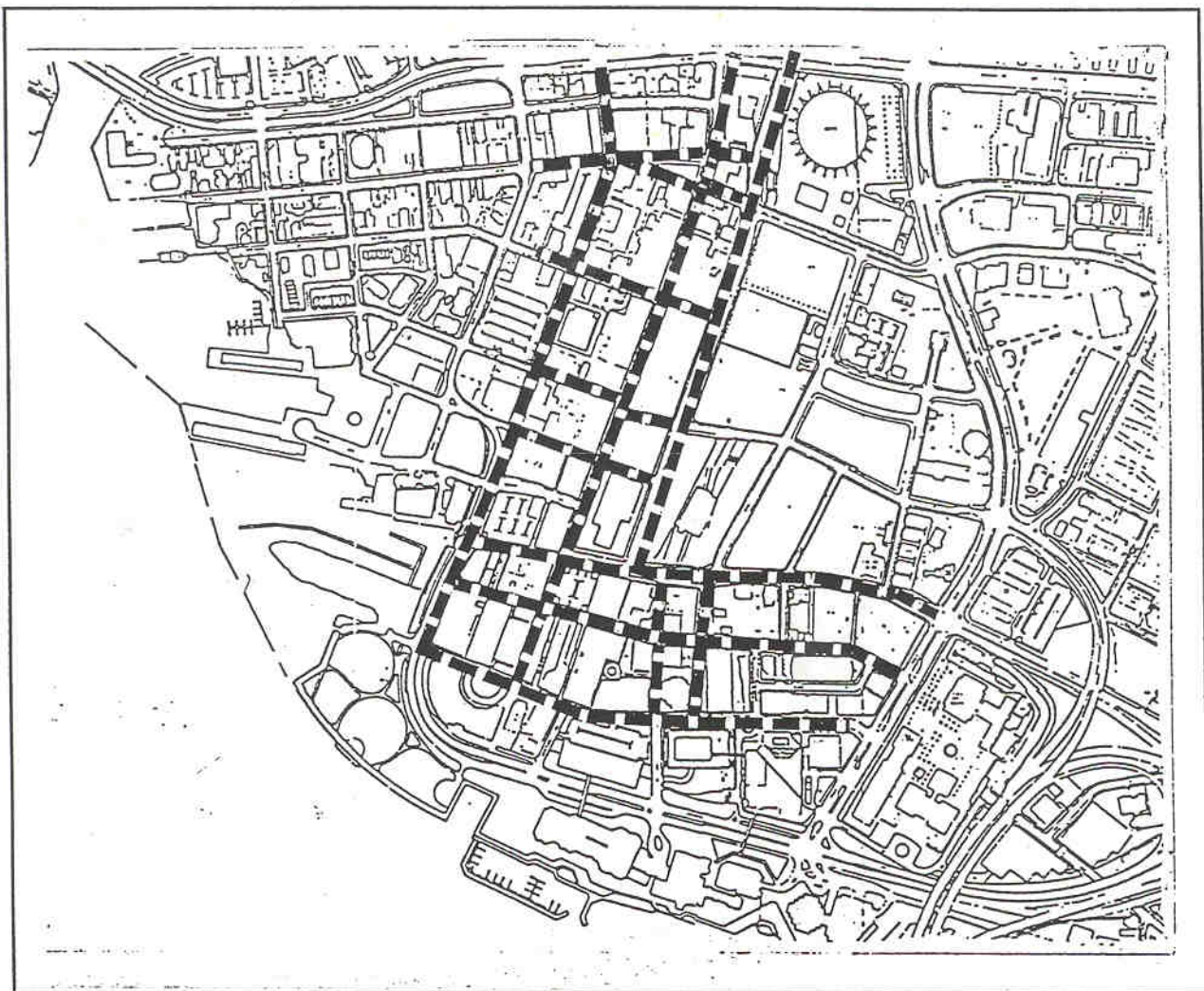
By placing retail enterprises, restaurants, services, and businesses on the ground levels of buildings, this floor level will appear to be active, encouraging pedestrian traffic.

Facades facing primary streets should not present blank surfaces or non-pedestrian uses such as exposed parking decks. Curb cuts are not appropriate between intersections along frontages on primary streets and should be discouraged. Service and garage entrances and drive-through access should be located along less travelled streets.



**Figure 5** - This older building addresses the pedestrian by emphasizing storefronts, entrances, and windows on the street.





**Map 2 - Primary Streets within the Historic Overlay District.**

## **FACADE GUIDELINES**

**GUIDELINE:** Differentiate the ground floor facade of a building from upper stories in recognition of the differences in the character of activities at the pedestrian level.

Cornices, changes of material, and other architectural details have traditionally been used in Norfolk to differentiate the ground floor of buildings, which usually have retail or other commercial uses from the upper stories. This permits flexibility at the ground level for different tenants. The differentiation of the ground floor facades allows signs, awnings, exterior lighting, display windows, and other devices to occur and to change, without affecting upper facades.

**GUIDELINE:** Architectural details and overall facades of a new building should be compatible with the expression of adjacent, original facades.

Buildings in the historic district are far from uniform. The architect for a new building must decide which architectural cues from existing structures best fulfill the intent of this guideline. For example, a new building should contain a horizontal emphasis at a level similar to the cornice height of surrounding buildings.

Constructing new buildings with few or no details or ornament should be avoided particularly in areas where buildings with rich detailing and ornamentation are common.

**GUIDELINE:** The facade of a new building should be compatible with the historic and architectural character of the area, yet should also be recognizable as a product of its time.

Developers and architects should avoid constructing new buildings which seek to create an earlier architectural period with no historic basis, but instead should develop a vocabulary of local and regional architectural forms and materials rather than creating anonymous, anyplace architecture.

**GUIDELINE:** The size and proportion, or the ratio of width to height, of window and door openings of a new building should be similar to and compatible with those adjacent original facades.

In general, in older buildings, windows and doors are significantly taller than they are wide.

**GUIDELINE:** The ratio of solids (walls) and voids (windows and doors) of a new building should relate to and be compatible with adjacent original facades.

In general, in older buildings, windows appear as openings in walls and the amount of wall predominates over the amount of windows. Glazing which covers more than fifty percent of the area



above the first floor is discouraged.

## **GUIDELINE FOR BUILDING TOPS AND ROOF FORMS**

**GUIDELINE:**        **The roof of a new building should be consistent with and similar to adjacent contributing buildings in type, shape, and material.**

For example, a building with a pitched roof should ordinarily not be built in the middle of a block of existing commercial buildings with flat roofs, particularly if the gable end of the roof faces toward the street.

**GUIDELINE:**        **Roof top additions which do not match the materials, detailing, and articulation of the facade below should not be visible from the pedestrian level across the street from the primary street facade.**

An alternative would be to mask the additions with facades and a roof that are compatible with the historic district.

## **GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING MATERIALS**

**GUIDELINE:**        **The selection of materials for new construction should relate to and be compatible with the overall character of the Downtown Historic Overlay District buildings.**

Developers and architects should avoid constructing a new building with materials whose colors and textures vary significantly from the surrounding facades and cause the building to stand out against the adjacent buildings. For example a commercial building with wood or aluminum siding in a row of brick buildings is inappropriate.

Buildings in the historic district are characterized by an appearance of permanence and substance and make use of facade materials like brick, stone, tile, marble, granite, and some forms of concrete. These materials or other materials with similar appearance and durability are encouraged. Conversely, many metal wall-covering installations appear to be temporary, and, therefore, are not encouraged. Metal and glass curtain-walls representative of modernist design would be difficult to make compatible with the appearance of bearing-wall construction created in many of the historic buildings.

The proportions of glass sizes in window openings should relate to the glazing of other historic buildings in the Historic District, and reflective or colored glass would normally not be appropriate. Clear non-reflective glass is particularly encouraged on the first floor.

**GUIDELINE:**        **The selection and use of colors for a new building should be coordinated and compatible with adjacent buildings, particularly in areas where consistent families of color predominate.**

Paint colors for window and door trim, and the colors of materials should be selected with attention to compatibility with existing buildings in the Historic District. For example, bricks should be selected that are comparable in color to bricks already used in the Historic District.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS, AWNINGS AND EXTENSIONS INTO THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES & PROCEDURES**

Some of the most visible aspects of the downtown area are the signs and graphics that orient, direct, and inform the public. Awnings serve both a marketing and aesthetic purpose as well as providing protection from the elements. They can also highlight a building and add visual interest to the streetscape.

The most important function of signs and graphics is to attract and engage customers. Signs must locate businesses and identify the goods and services provided by them. Likewise, when businesses are vacated, signs should be removed.

Signs are recognized as two different types, primary and secondary identifiers. For specific sign regulations please see Chapter 16 of the Zoning Ordinance.

A balance must be struck between each business's need to capture attention, and the character of the Historic District and the need for a positive identity and image for the entire downtown.

Signs, awnings, and other extensions into the public right of way require an ordinance passed by the City Council giving permission to encroach. New installations as well as changes to existing encroachments will require review. The following procedures should be followed to obtain permission:

1. Obtain an application from the Division of Surveys, Department of Public Works.
2. Submit the application to the City Surveyor who will coordinate the internal review of the proposal with other departments and agencies.
3. The Applicant should also schedule review of the project before the Design Review Committee.
4. Applicant will be notified of approval and any associated conditions or disapproval.



5. If there are no objections, an ordinance will be prepared by the City Attorney.
6. Ordinance is forwarded to City Council for action.

It normally takes six to eight weeks for this process to be completed. An encroachment that is granted by City Council is also revocable at the will of Council.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SIGNS**

**GUIDELINE:** Appropriate sign types in an urban area are the flat wall mounted signs, permanent window signs, permanent banners, and appropriately scaled projecting signs. Signs should represent the primary business name.

Signs must be compatible with the building and storefront.

Standardized trademark signs such as national soft drink signs are not appropriate unless they identify the occupant of the building.

Hand lettered signs are discouraged unless done by a professional sign painter.

Posters may be used on private property to announce special events and should be professionally produced. If they are placed in a window they should not cover more than 30% of the glass.

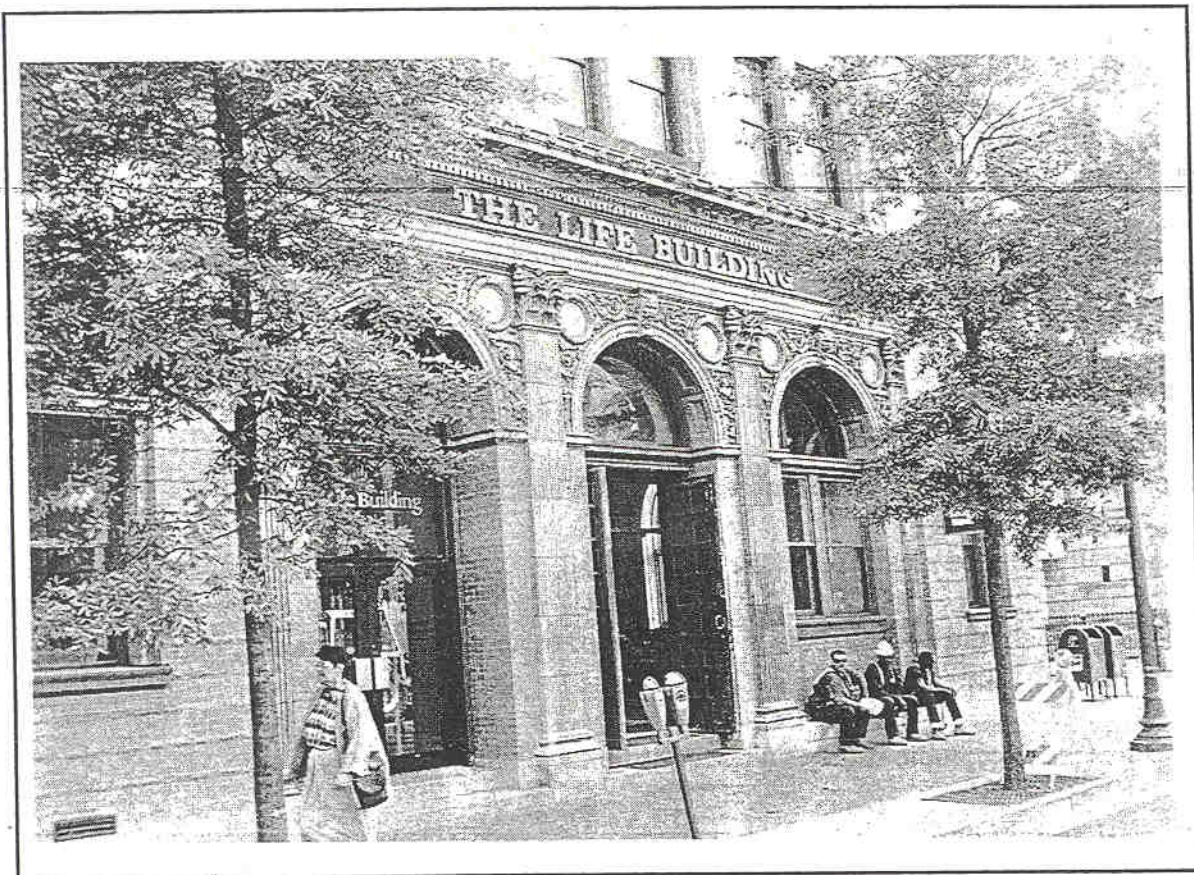
Sign lettering must be appropriately scaled to the size of the sign with a maximum of twelve inch high letters.

**GUIDELINE:** Signs should be placed so that they are visible from automobiles and to pedestrians and should not obscure openings or building details. Signs should not be placed above the sill of the second story windows or fifteen feet from the sidewalk line, whichever is lower.

Existing sign bands above the storefront should be utilized where possible and appropriate.

Secondary signage should be located at the pedestrian level.

Projecting signs should not protrude more than four feet from the building and should be located along the facade at the first floor level no closer than eight and a half feet above the sidewalk.



**Figure 6** - This wall mounted sign is visible from automobiles and to pedestrians and is compatible in size and detail with the building.

**GUIDELINE:**      **The size of individual signs and the total area of signs should be compatible with the building.**

Signs should not cover or obscure significant architectural features of a building in the historic district.

**GUIDELINE:**      **Limit the number of permanent signs per building to promote clarity and discourage clutter.**

The number or size of signs should not overpower the building on which they are located.

Excluding awnings, only one projecting sign per building is suggested.

In the case of several businesses occupying one building, one directory sign or kiosk should be utilized in lieu of individual signs for each business. The primary building sign could indicate the building name.



Temporary signs are prohibited except during area-wide special events and festivals. They should be put up no more than two weeks prior to the event and removed the following working day after the event.

Sandwich board signs are acceptable for use during business operating hours only. Only one sign per building frontage is permitted. (Note: Temporary signs on private property are specifically prohibited by the sign regulations in the Norfolk Zoning Code. Signs may be permitted in the public right-of-way if an encroachment ordinance is obtained.)

**GUIDELINE:** Sign lighting should be subtle and understated, yet visible at night and be in keeping with the character of the building.

Where possible, signs should be indirectly lit with an invisible light source.

Internally illuminated plastic signs are discouraged.

The light level should not overpower the facade or other signs on the street. Light sources should be shielded.

Neon signs are acceptable if they do not obscure the display windows.

## **GUIDELINES FOR AWNINGS**

**GUIDELINE:** Awning types, materials, and placement should be carefully coordinated and be compatible with the characteristics of the building.

Awnings should be carefully placed within or above storefront openings.

Awnings should not interfere with existing signs or distinctive architectural elements of the building, with street trees or street lights.

**GUIDELINE:** Awning colors should be coordinated and compatible with the building as well as with the character of the surrounding buildings.

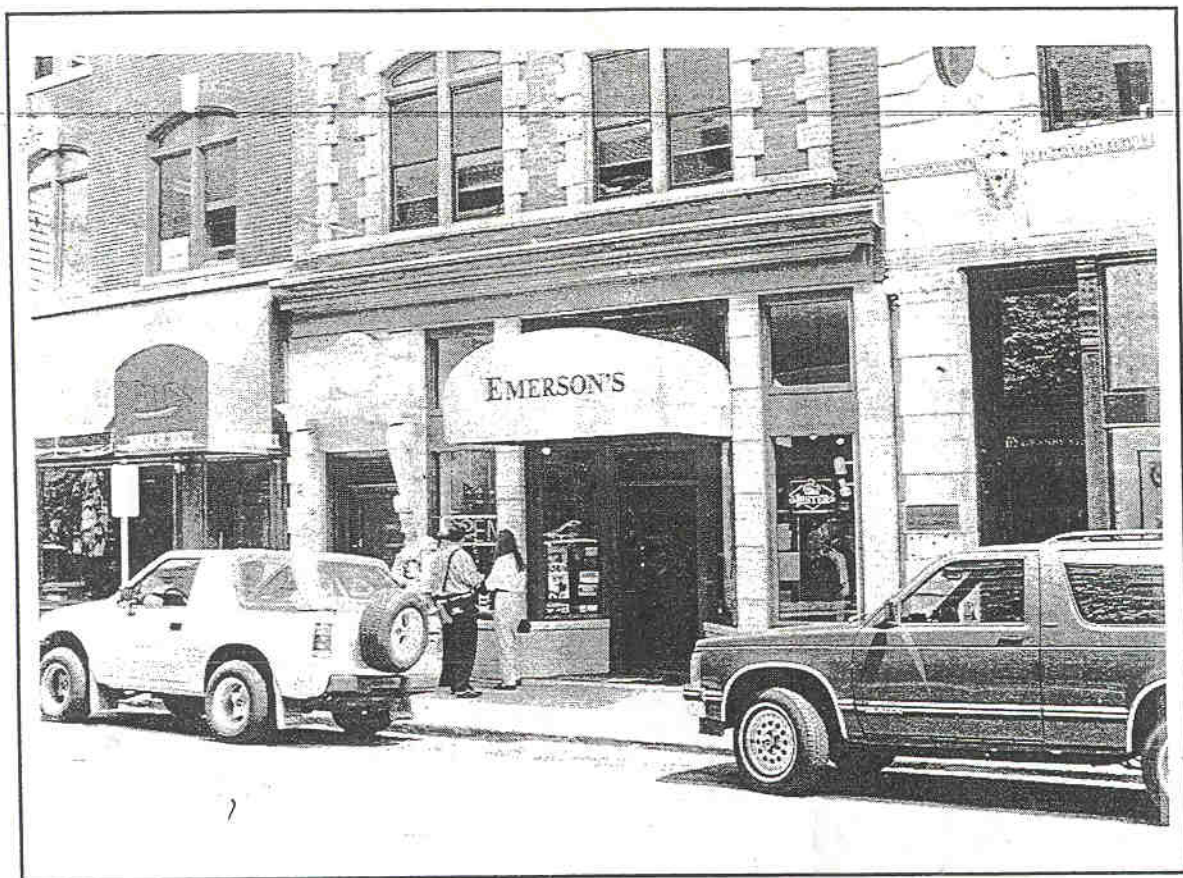
Colors should be coordinated as a part of an overall color scheme for the street.

Overly bright colors should be avoided.

**GUIDELINE:** The front and side panels of an awning may be used for a sign where appropriate.

Letters may be sewn on or silk screened on the valance when it is part of an overall and coordinated scheme.

Signs on awnings must be professionally lettered.



**Figure 7** - The awnings at center and to the left are coordinated with the characteristics of the buildings and are used for appropriate signage.

## **GUIDELINES FOR EXTENSIONS INTO THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**

Extensions into the right-of-way, aside from signs, fall into two general categories; facade treatments and/or at-grade open air dining areas. In both cases, permit and encroachment procedures must be followed. Extensions should not weaken the visual continuity of the street or detract from the architectural or historic significance of building facades.

**GUIDELINE:**            **An extension into the public right-of-way must be in harmony with the building to which it is affixed.**

The sidewalk must be wide enough to accommodate the extension. An amount of space must be retained that allows for pedestrians to traverse the sidewalk safely.

Open air dining areas must conform to City Standards. (See adopted policies in the Appendix.)



Materials used in the extension should relate to those of the facade.

The color scheme of extensions must be coordinated with the facade as part of an overall design theme.

Materials used in extensions must be durable and withstand the pressure of pedestrian crowding. Chains, ropes, and unsupported railings are not allowed.



**Figure 8** - This open air dining area extends into the public right of way in harmony with the building.



## DOWNTOWN OUTDOOR DINING POLICY

Downtown Norfolk is becoming established as the unique center of the region. Its core is developed with a dynamic mix of office, commercial, retail, hotel, convention, and entertainment uses. The success of the waterfront should extend into the Downtown core, and this can occur by locating a range of restaurant, entertainment, and retail activities along the street facades. Downtown for the purpose of this policy will be all the Downtown Zoning District, D-1, D-2, D-3, and D-4.

Uses should be encouraged to extend to the sidewalk. The great cities of the world, even those with a less pleasant climate than Norfolk's tend to have sidewalk uses such as dining areas and cafes. As we re-establish downtown Norfolk, the more visible activities there are the better.

Permitting outdoor dining in Downtown will be an asset to the area and consistent with the goals of the General Plan and of the Downtown Plan.

The following guidelines will be for use Downtown:

- 1) that the design of the outdoor dining area is compatible with the building with which it is associated and with others on the street block face and that the dining enclosure is understated and compliments the architecture of the building;
- 2) that the dining area shall not reduce the passable sidewalk area to less than 6 feet between any obstruction (such as tree wells, light fixtures, signs, etc.) and the outer edge of the outdoor dining enclosure;
- 3) that the dining area will be an installation designed so that posts, awnings, chairs, tables, planters, etc. can be removed and stored elsewhere during off-season; or extended periods of non-use exceeding 30 days; off-season for the purpose of this policy shall be November 1 - March 31; whether a specific outdoor dining area should be removed during the off-season or remain open will be addressed on a case by case basis during the design review process;
- 4) that signs on any form of covering for the dining area (awnings or umbrellas) are acceptable as long as they do not exceed the maximum permissible under the Zoning Ordinance; the signs, however, shall advertise only the establishment and not any specific product or service;
- 5) that the outdoor dining area shall be maintained in a usable state and chairs, tables, and other appurtenances shall not be stacked or stored outdoors;
- 6) that all initial physical improvements to the outdoor dining area, including signs, and any subsequent changes to the physical improvements, shall be approved by the Design Review Committee and City Planning Commission;
- 7) that the restaurant owner agrees to maintain in good condition all appurtenances placed in the City's right-of-way or on City property and must protect the sidewalk finishes from damage; and



- 8) that the applicant acknowledges that he/she must adhere to all terms and provisions in the leases with the City.

All plans for outdoor dining areas will follow the usual review and approval process for encroachments except that the final recommendations will be forwarded to the Department of Development for preparation of a lease to be executed between the City and the applicant.

It is noted that other conditions or requirements may be imposed by other City agencies and/or by the Design Review Committee and City Planning Commission as part of the review process.

Adopted by the Norfolk Design Review Committee, December 7, 1998

Adopted by the Norfolk City Planning Commission, December 10, 1998